

Dear Human Services Committee members:

I am strongly in support of SB 408.

As a former mental health counselor and a person who lives with mental illness, I have found that psychologists and licensed social workers have been a great help to me in learning to live with a chronic disorder and not only manage my life but even thrive in recent years. I believe that licensed mental health counselors should also be included as Medicaid providers. All of these professionals have a great deal to offer those who live with mental illness.

In addition, adding these professionals to the roster of Medicaid providers would aid in providing the community services that were promised when state mental hospitals were closed down.

These professionals provide services at lower cost than physicians and have more experience with mental health issues than internists and general physicians. They are often more accessible than over-crowded clinics where one may wait weeks for an appointment. Clinic services are often decreased once a patient is stabilized, leaving them vulnerable to relapses that can be prevented with ongoing counseling or therapy.

Therefore, I ask that you approve SB 408 with the addition of LCSWs and LPCs to psychologists who can treat Medicaid patients.

Sincerely,

Barbara

Sloan, M.Ed. (formerly NCC and certified in addictions treatment at the supervisory level)

Wallingford, CT

jbonline1111@gmail.com